

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5229

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4855

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (SMITH, LINDA; SMITH, MICHELLE LYNN), PFOR PINS VS ICRC

SUBJ: EFFORTS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON AMERICANS MISSING IN
VIETNAM

REF: A. SAIGON 3154; B. GENEVA 2373

1. REFTELS DEALT WITH OUR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON AMERICANS
MISSING IN BAN ME THUOT, INCLUDING MRS. LINDA SMITH AND HER
DAUGHTER MICHELLE LYNN SMITH.

2. WE RECENTLY LEARNED FROM MR. SMITH, WHO IS STILL A DAO EMPLOYEE
IN SAIGON, THAT HIS WIFE HAS HAD OPEN HEART SURGERY AND CON-
SEQUENTLY REQUIRES, ON A REGULAR BASIS, A BLOOD THINNING MEDICATION,
ANOTHER MEDICATION TO CONTROL HER HEART BEAT AND IRON TABLETS.
ACCORDING TO MR. SMITH, HIS WIFE PROBABLY HAD A TWO-WEEK SUPPLY
OF THESE MEDICATIONS WHEN SHE WENT TO BAN ME THUOT AND SHE
PROBABLY COULD NOT LIVE VERY LONG WITHOUT THEM. MR. SMITH THINKS
THE ONLY SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO HIS WIFE'S MEDICAL PROBLEMS
WOULD BE HER RELEASE, ALTHOUGH AN UNSATISFACTORY ALTERNATIVE MIGHT
BE TO ESTABLISH A METHOD OF SENDING HER THE MEDICATION.
ONE REASON THIS ALTERNATIVE IS UNSATISFACTORY IS THAT SHE MIGHT
ALREADY NEED HOSPITALIZATION.

3. MR. SMITH NOTED THAT HIS WIFE IS ETHNICALLY VIETNAMESE, AND
THAT CONSEQUENTLY SHE MAY HAVE AVOIDED NVA/VC CUSTODY,
ALTHOUGH HIS DAUGHTER IS CLEARLY PARTLY CAUCASIAN.

4. MR. SMITH INFORMED US FURTHER THAT HE HAD TALKED TO LTC SON,
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 04855 121012Z

HEAD OF THE "PRG" DELEGATION TO THE FOUR-PARTY JOINT MILITARY

TEAM, ON MARCH 27, ALONG WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHRISTIAN AND MILITARY ALLIANCE WHO WERE MAKING INQUIRIES ABOUT THEIR PEOPLE MISSING IN BAN ME THUOT. MR. SMITH SAID HE EXPLAINED HIS WIFE'S CONDITION TO THE "PRG" AND GAVE THEM PHOTOCOPIES OF HIS PASSPORT AND THAT OF HIS DAUGHTER. LTC SON PROMISED TO PASS ON THIS REQUEST BUT SAID IT WAS NOT REALLY THE PROPER CONCERN OF HIS DELEGATION.

5. UPON LEARNING OF THE FOREGOING, EMBASSY URGED SMITH TO APPROACH DIRECTLY LOCAL ICRC REPRESENTATIVE ANTOINE WEBER. SMITH DID SO APRIL 9 AND REPORTED TO US THAT WEBER PROMISED TO SEND AN URGENT REQUEST TO ICRC GENEVA TO CONTACT THE OTHER SIDE. WEBER THOUGHT THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE OF OBTAINING HER RELEASE BUT SAID CONTACTS WOULD STILL TAKE AT LEAST SEVERAL DAYS.

6. WE PLAN TO APPROACH "PRG" DELEGATION FPJMT FURTHER ON THIS CASE. WE ALSO RECOMMEND U.S. MISSION GENEVA FOLLOW UP ON APPROACH REPORTED REF B AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOVE CONCERNING MRS. SMITH, EMPHASIZING DESIRABILITY OF EARLY RETURN OF MRS. SMITH AND HER DAUGHTER TO HER HUSBAND IN SAIGON.

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